

# Global Gazette Disability

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**November – December 2019 Volume 13, Issue 78**

## **New NDIA CEO to start on 4 November**

The NDIA has appointed a new CEO, 170 days on from Robert De Luca's shock departure from the role. The government has unveiled **Martin Hoffman as the new CEO of the National Disability Insurance Agency.**

NDIS Minister Stuart Robert said Hoffman had the "dedication, vision, and expertise" to lead the disability scheme. "He will build on the ground-breaking work already underway and will make a real difference in delivering on the **government's commitment to realising the full benefits of the scheme for participants,**" Robert said.

Hoffman was previously head of the NSW Department of Finance, Services and Innovation, with responsibility for organisations including Service NSW, NSW Fair Trading and SafeWork NSW. He also was recently appointed by Minister Robert to lead the transformation of the Department of Human Services into Services Australia.

Read other commentary in the full Pro Bono Australia article [here](#).

## **Disability News**

### **'They see it as a threat': People with disability warned not to challenge NDIS decisions**

People with disability are afraid to challenge problems in their National Disability Insurance Scheme funding plans because they have been told they risk having other services cut if they do so, a parliamentary inquiry has heard. Every Australian Counts campaign director Kirsten Deane told a parliamentary hearing in Brisbane that people had been told by their planners or Local Area Coordinators that if they asked for a review to challenge an NDIS decision, it would put their whole plan up for review and could lead to other services being cut. "They see it as a threat," Deane said. She told Pro Bono News that this "unconscionable" threat was indeed real, with people coming forward to reveal they had undergone a review for one decision only to see other parts of their plan cut. "There is also a major backlog of reviews, which means people are waiting anywhere between six to nine months, and sometimes even 12 months, just to be heard." Read the full Pro Bono Australia article [here](#).

## **Featured Conference & Special Events**

**6 -8 November 2019**

**Australasian Society for Intellectual Disability Conference.**

Adelaide Hilton, ASID. [Info](#).

**25 -29 November 2019**

**P.A.R.T. Train The Trainer**

**(Predict Assess Respond to Threats of Aggression).**

Westmead, Sydney. MTU Training Concepts. <mailto:info@mtu.net.au>

3 December 2019  
**International Day of People with Disability**  
<http://www.idpwd.com.au/>

## Disability News

### Spinal Cord Injury Research \$15m NSW Government Funding

NSW Treasurer the Hon Dominic Perrottet MP announced “a new investment in cutting edge spinal research – to one day help people who were told they would never walk, take their first steps”.

“We hope, Mr Speaker, that our 15 million dollars in funding for spinal cord injury research also leads to a brighter future for people with a spinal cord injury, possibly bringing us a little closer to a cure,” the Treasurer announced.

SpinalCure’s CEO Duncan Wallace was honoured to have been invited, along with SpinalCure Ambassador Sam Bloom and our guest, Christine Tink, President of SCIA, to be on the floor of the Chamber of the Legislative Assembly for the Budget Speech.

Read the full article [here](#).

## Disability News

### Disability groups call for better quality plans in NDIS review

NDIS Minister Stuart Robert announced a review of NDIS legislation and rules, in an effort to streamline processes in the scheme. The review – to be conducted by David Tune AO PSM – will inform the development of the government’s promised NDIS Participant Service Guarantee, which sets new standards for how long it takes people to get their NDIS plan or have their plan reviewed.

“The Participant Service Guarantee will take effect from 1 July 2020 and will have a particular focus on children as well as participants needing specialist disability accommodation and assistive technology,” Robert said.

People with Disability Australia have welcomed the review, noting NDIS participants were waiting too long to access essential equipment and get their plans finalised. But PWDA policy and advocacy director Romola Hollywood said people with disability were also finding their plans did not reflect the support they needed.

Read the full Pro Bono Australia article [here](#).

## Disability Issues In The Media

### NDIS providers footing bill for patients

**Service providers are footing the bill while individuals under their care wait for approval for National Disability Insurance Scheme plans**, a committee has heard. **One provider says it's been owed as much as \$500,000 from the National Disability Insurance Agency** - which runs the NDIS - and is currently owed more than \$100,000. A joint committee on NDIS performance was also told a lack of diversity of service providers was depriving the sector of innovation and competition. Read the full AAP 28 Oct 19 Channel Nine National News article [here](#).

### [NDIS underspend helps return budget to the brink of surplus](#)

The federal government spent \$4.6 billion less on the National Disability Insurance Scheme than expected because of delays getting people into the program, new budget figures reveal. Read the full Pro Bono Australia article [here](#).

### [Bureaucrat faces grilling over young people in aged care](#)

A health department bureaucrat has been asked by a royal commissioner to explain whether the 6000 young Australians with disability who are currently in aged care facilities have been ignored and forgotten by government policy. The commission heard an average of 42 people under 65 enter residential care each week; equal to six every day and 2000 a year. Read the full Community Care Review article [here](#).

## **[NDIS struggling to accommodate people with psychosocial disability](#)**

People with severe mental health issues are having their National Disability Insurance Scheme funding cut because the system does not account for the episodic nature of psychosocial disability, a new report says. Read the full Pro Bono Australia article [here](#).

## **[11 Ways To Get Better NDIS Outcomes in Regional and Remote Communities](#)**

A lot of focus is given to the problems faced by Regional and Remote Communities, particularly when it comes to the NDIS. We get it, it's tough. Here we dig deep into our experience and take a look at some solutions instead. Read the the full Disability Services Consulting article [here](#).

## **[The Administrative Appeals Tribunal affirms less than 2% of NDIS decisions appealed by participants](#)**

With over 90 per cent of appeal cases potentially subject to undue influence by the NDIA – the very body whose actions are being questioned in the AAT – it is not clear that the NDIS appeals process is at all fair, writes Geoff Southwell. Only a tiny proportion of appeals that people with disability bring to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT) are actually heard by the tribunal – the rest are negotiated by the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA). The AAT's own figures show the NDIA is potentially using undue influence to get participants to back down or to accept lesser claims. Read the full ProBono Australia article [here](#).

## **[Disability and rare disease: towards person centered care for Australians with rare diseases](#)**

Many Australians with rare diseases aren't receiving the treatment they deserve. This report uses comprehensive survey data gathered from Australians with rare diseases, and their carers, to identify gaps in treatment and outline how services, including the NDIS, can deliver better health outcomes. Read the full APO Analysis & Policy Observatory article [here](#).

## **[Government budget balance result of "short-changing" and underspending on NDIS](#)**

The Federal Government recently announced that they have put the budget into surplus, but outlined that an estimated \$4.6 billion was not spent on the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) over the 2018-2019 budget. Read the full Disability Support Guide article [here](#).

## **[Report finds satisfaction with disability services](#)**

Almost half a million Australians are receiving specialist disability services and the vast majority are happy with the support they receive, according to a government report. The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare's *People with Disability in Australia* report released this week says almost 90 per cent of people with disability who need formal assistance are getting support. The report says an estimated 39 per cent of people with disability living in the community need assistance from formal providers; 64 per cent of which are private commercial operations and the rest government providers. Read the full Community Care Review article [here](#).

## **[Why waiting lists don't tell the full story on social housing demand](#)**

Demand for social housing in Australia could be more than 300 per cent higher than waiting lists suggest, according to new research. Read the full Pro Bono Australia article [here](#).

## **[Hidden camera captures abuse of resident](#)**

A surveillance camera installed in a resident's bedroom has uncovered ongoing abuse from staff, the aged care royal commission has heard. Read the full Australian Ageing Agenda article [here](#)

## **[Meet the woman who spent 22 months applying for the Disability Support Pension](#)**

When she turned up at Centrelink with her wheelchair, assistance dog and carer, staff wondered how it was possible she was not yet receiving any payments. Read the full ProBono Australia article [here](#).

## **[Report shows scale of violence against people with disability](#)**

A second report released by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) has revealed people with disability are almost two times more likely to have experienced physical and/or sexual violence by their partners. Read the full Talking Disability article [here](#).

## **[NDIS issues putting a strain on the mental health system](#)**

Australian governments must work together to ensure people with severe mental health issues who are ineligible for the National Disability Insurance Scheme can use psychosocial support services, the National Mental Health Commission says. Read the full Pro Bono Australia article [here](#).

## [NDIS uptake by people with psychosocial disability lower than expected](#)

A report from the National Mental Health Commission (NMHC) has highlighted that the Government isn't doing enough to support people with psychosocial disabilities onto the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), which is falling short of its projected uptake by 38,000 people. Read the full Disability Support Guide article [here](#).

## [Royal Commission targets NDIS providers](#)

The Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability has opened with a hearing in Brisbane. A "substantial number" of the largest NDIS providers are being ordered to provide information relating to complaints, investigations and reported incidents of violence and abuse. Senior Counsel Assisting Rebecca Treston said the commission had compulsory powers to gather information and evidence. "These include the power to issue notices requiring people to produce documents, things or information to the commission, to provide written statements or to attend and give evidence in person," she said. Read the full Community Care Review article [here](#).

## [NDIA passes 150 days without a permanent CEO](#)

Bill Shorten has slammed the Morrison government for failing to appoint a new National Disability Insurance Agency CEO, five months on from the sudden resignation of former boss Robert De Luca. Read the full Pro Bono Australia [here](#).

## [People experiencing homelessness struggling to navigate the NDIS](#)

A different approach is needed to get more people experiencing homelessness into the National Disability Insurance Scheme, experts say. During a session at the Victorian Homelessness Conference, panellists from across the social sector discussed how the NDIS was catering to people with disability who were homeless or at risk. Read the full Pro Bono Australia [here](#).

## Featured Organisation

### **Aspect - Autism Spectrum Australia**

<https://www.autismspectrum.org.au/content/about-aspect>

Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) is Australia's leading service provider for autism and other disabilities. Our specialised, evidence informed [schools](#) program is the largest in the world, with additional services that include [information and advice](#), [diagnostic assessments](#), [behaviour support](#), [parent and family support](#), and [adult programs](#).

[Autism](#) is a lifelong disability that affects about one in 100 Australians, or 230,000 people. The word spectrum reflects the different challenges that people with autism face and the degree to which they may be affected.

[Our services](#) provide people with autism with the opportunity to realise their unique potential, as well as providing much needed support to their families, carers, friends and colleagues. Aspect's vision is to provide the best possible opportunities for people with autism and other disabilities.

Click on the links for more information about:

- [What's important to us](#)
- [Aspect Service Charter](#) - our commitment to you
- [Aspect Comprehensive Approach](#)
- [Meet the team](#)
- [Our patron](#)
- [Structure & Governance](#)
- [Vision, mission & values](#)
- [Become a member](#)
- [Reporting performance](#)
- [History](#)

**Global Disability & Health Care Services** supports **Autism Spectrum Charity Christmas Cards** and you can as well by ordering this year's family and/or organisation cards here.

**GLOBAL** – for casual staffing Specialist in Disability, Mental Health, General and Home Care staffing services **FREE PHONE 1800 009 292** <https://www.globaldisability.com.au/>

## Disability News

### Single biggest reform to support Australian carers in over 10 years

Australia's 2.7 million carers will be better supported in their valuable roles under what has been labelled the 'single biggest reform [for carers] in more than a decade.'

The Minister for Families and Social Services, Anne Ruston, announced a new regional network of service providers, which will deliver more than five times the number of services currently available.

Ten not-for-profit organisations will receive \$493 million in funding over five years to establish a network of 16 service providers to support carers through the national carer hub, Carer Gateway.

Read the full Disability Support Guide article [here](#).

## Disability News

### Report finds people with disability 'aren't getting a fair go'

People with disability are four times more likely to experience high psychological distress than other Australians, according to new research.

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare's (AIHW) latest report used a range of national data sources to create the organisation's first comprehensive look at the lives of people with disability.

It found the disability community suffered poorer outcomes in areas such as mental and physical health, employment outcomes and education.

Almost a third of adults with disability (32 per cent) said they experienced high/very high psychological distress, compared to eight per cent of people without disability.

Read the full Pro Bono Australia article [here](#).

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<https://www.globaldisability.com.au/apply-for-a-position/>

## Disability News

### [People with disability in Australia: in brief](#)

This Australian Institute of Health and Welfare report provides an overview of key content from the AIHW's comprehensive *People with disability in Australia* online report. These highlights draw upon the most recent available data at the time of publication. More detailed information, such as on trends and groups within the disability population, is presented in the online report.

More than 4 million Australians have disability, or around 18% of the population. This is also known as the prevalence of disability. 6.3% with intellectual or developmental disability, 32% have a severe or profound disability, 13% of people under 65yo and 51% for those aged 65 and over. 27% need help with property maintenance and 24% need help with household chores. 57% of people with primary intellectual disability including autism receives support from the NDIS. People with severe or profound disability (14%) are more likely than others with disability (close to 0%) to live in cared accommodation.

Access the Report Summary at Analysis and Policy Observatory [here](#).

"A key gap is information about what services people with disability use, across mainstream and specialist areas, and how coordinated, timely and effective they are." [www.Freedom2Live.com.au](http://www.Freedom2Live.com.au)

## Books & Publications

### [Australia's Welfare 2019](#)

The Australian Institute of Health & Welfare (AIHW) has compiled *Australia's welfare*—a biennial national report card on the welfare of Australians and the role of welfare services and supports—since 1993. Covering housing, education, employment, health and safety, etc. Access the report [here](#).

### [Carers of older Australians](#)

Briefing Paper for the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety. Carers are critical to the sustainability of the aged care system. They provide support and services that may otherwise be funded by the taxpayer, the estimated value of which is significant. This paper provides an overview of the role of carers in supporting older people, the impact of caring and carer needs, and the available supports and services. Access the report from Analysis Policy Observatory [here](#).

### [Mental health services in Australia](#)

81,004 clients with mental health issues used Specialist Homelessness Services in 2017-18. Read the updated sections in this web update on psychiatric disability support services 2017-18, specialist homelessness services 2017-18, mental health workforce 2017 and [overview of mental health services in Australia](#).

## Policies & Guidelines

### **The Royal Commission Is Here – What You Need To Know**

We are actually living through some really exciting and historic times for disability rights in Australia. Right now, there is bipartisan support behind calls for reform. And with the Royal Commission, we have the opportunity to dramatically improve how we support people to safeguard their human rights. But with all the movement that has been occurring in the sector, you would be forgiven for not being across the details of the Disability Royal Commission. So before it really gears up, let's take a look at what it is all about! Access the full Disability Services Consulting article by Sara Gingold [here](#).

### **Austrroads releases paper on future regulation of MMDs**

Austrroads has released a discussion paper to investigate the future of national regulation for motorised mobility devices (MMD). Following Standards Australia publishing a Technical Specification for motorised wheelchairs and mobility scooters in 2018, Austrroads is exploring how this Technical Specification can be implemented to realise its intended safety benefits. Read the full Freedom2Live article [here](#).

## Directories Online

### **Disability Aids & Equipment at Freedom 2Live**

<https://www.freedom2live.com.au>

A great starting point for information on disability aids and equipment for mobility, household aids, transport and vehicles, pressure care, communications and wellbeing. Why not subscribe to their free enewsletter.

### **ABILITY CLASSIFIEDS**

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[www.abilityclassifieds.com](http://www.abilityclassifieds.com)

**Alive 90.5 fm Australian Spectrum Show with Ross** (Your Editor of the Global Gazette)

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**Tuesday night 9 to 12 pm** for all Australian blues, roots, jazz, folk and contemporary music. Weekly studio guests. Blues, Folk and Jazz Gig Guide and music.

**Internet Radio Streaming worldwide online at [www.alive905.com.au](http://www.alive905.com.au)** [follow the Listen Live links]

Over 550 Australian artistes have been featured studio guests on the Alive 90.5 fm Australian Spectrum Show over the 11 years of broadcasting.

**The studio guests coming up include:** = Cameron Jones, Oz Manouche Festival, The Water Runners, Franky Valentyn Project, Amanda Easton, Martin Cilia, Foreday Riders, Ray Beadle, Ivor SK, Stormcellar, Bruce Johnson, Girrakool Festival, Gwyn Ashton, 8 Ball Aitken, Luke Escombe, The Vegetable Plot, Simon Kinny-Lewis, Blues Preachers, The Blind Pilots, Handsome Young Strangers, Ross Ward The Defenders, Andrew Jacobs, Lucie Tiger, James Wiechman, Tracey Ann Palmer, Glenn Bidmead, Chris Turner, Toongabbie Music Club, Jubilee Jazz Anniversary, Black Knight, Blush Music Club, PHUN Uke and many more in 2020. **Join our 15,000+ Facebook Likes** or follow our studio guest announcements at <https://www.facebook.com/Australian.Spectrum.Show.Alive90.5fm>

## Disability Aids, Equipment & Supplies News

### [Survey into Assistive Technology opportunities for disability sector](#)

The Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute wants volunteer research participants to be part of a national study into assistive technologies (AT). If you are an end-user or carer who have or intend buying, smart technology or other products including monitoring or security devices, then this survey is for you.

The aim is to identify the social and economic benefits and opportunities that AT does and can play in supporting independent living. It will investigate how people with disability perceive AT and their views on incentives and disincentives to invest in them; and what drives or does not encourage better AT policy.

More details and survey link from the Freedom2Live News page [here](#).

## Grant & Fund Raising News

### [Five ways Australian charities are embracing tech to fundraise](#)

Technology is improving all the time, something many industries are fully embracing. But where do NFPs sit on this? We find out. Now in its fourth year, the [Global NGO Tech Report](#) provides an insight into how NGOs across the globe use technology to communicate with their supporters and fundraise. Using the survey results of over 5,700 NFPs from 160 countries, it delves into what charities think is working and what's not working. Read the full Pro Bono Australia article [here](#).

### **Not-for-Profit Governance & Performance Report**

The Australian Institute of Company Directors' Not-for-Profit Governance and Performance [Report](#) highlights challenges facing NFP directors and key areas of focus for boards. It finds NFP directors are consistently spending more time on their NFP board roles. Access the report [here](#).

## Research & Demographic Reports

### **[A national survey of Australian nurses who work with people with intellectual and developmental disability](#)**

A National Survey of Australian Nurses Who Work With People with Intellectual and Developmental Disability. Nathan J. Wilson, Peter Lewis, Lisa Whitehead, Virginia Howie, James Collison, Sarah Feighan, Michele Wiese, Kate O'Reilly and Hayden Jaques. (2019) <https://doi.org/10.26183/5d76e6d07efab> Western Sydney University Nurses play a vital role in the lives of people with intellectual and developmental disability (IDD), particularly those with chronic and complex physical or mental health problems. This project aims to redevelop the specialist practice standards for intellectual and developmental disability (IDD) nursing. Access the report [here](#).

### **Government launches National Disability Data Asset**

The COAG Australian Data and Digital Council, chaired for the first time by Minister for Government Services Stuart Robert, has agreed to establish a National Disability Data Asset, which when developed will help inform service choices by people with disabilities and their carers. The national agreement paves the way for a federation-wide view of the lived experience of Australians with disability. The Commonwealth will provide up to \$15 million to fund the pilot of the National Disability Data Asset. Part of the funding will be used to work with people with disability to inform how the Asset will be used. Read the full Freedom2Live article [here](#).

### [Inequalities in standards of living: evidence for improved income support for people with disability](#)

Jinjing Li, Laurie Brown, Hai Anh La, Riyana Miranti and Yogi Vidyattama. National Centre for Social and Economic Modelling, Institute for Governance and Policy Analysis. It is now thirteen years since the welfare-to-work change to the Disability Support Pension (DSP) was first introduced in 2006. While the DSP remains the main social security payment for working-aged individuals with disability, the evidence base on the impact of policy changes to the DSP since 2006 is lacking. This report attempts to answer some of the key policy issues. Access the full Report from Analysis & Policy Observatory [here](#).

## **Association of Prenatal Maternal Anemia With Neurodevelopmental Disorders**

Aline Marileen Wieggersma, MS; Christina Dalman, MD, PhD; Brian K. Lee, PhD; et al. *JAMA Psychiatry*. Published online September 18, 2019. doi:10.1001/jamapsychiatry.2019.2309. In this cohort study of 532 232 nonadoptive Swedish children and their 299 768 mothers, anemia diagnosed earlier in pregnancy ( $\leq 30$  weeks) was significantly associated with increased offspring risk of autism spectrum disorder, attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder, and intellectual disability. These associations were not apparent for anemia diagnosed later in pregnancy. The results emphasizing the importance of early screening for iron status and nutritional counseling in antenatal care.

## **The health of Disability Support Pension and Newstart Allowance recipients**

Prof. Alex Collie, Luke Sheehan, Dr. Ashley McAllister. Monash University, Public Health & Preventative Medicine Report. This study analysed self-reported health and health service use data from 638 Disability Support Pension (DSP) recipients, 442 Newstart Allowance (NSA) recipients and 8440 wage earners who completed the 2014/15 National Health Survey. 38% of DSP recipients rated their health as good, very good or excellent, compared with 67% of NSA recipients and 91% of wage earners. The rate of health service use was much higher in DSP recipients than wage earners. Access the full Report from Analysis & Policy Observatory [here](#).

## **Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, Hypomania, and Bipolar Disorder in Youth**

Lauren V. Moran, MD; Perihan Esra Guvenek-Cokol, MD; Roy H. Perlis, MD, MSc. *JAMA Psychiatry*. Published online August 14, 2019. doi:10.1001/jamapsychiatry.2019.1926. The diagnostic entity of bipolar disorder has evolved substantially over time, in particular in children and adolescents. The introduction of hypomania as a diagnostic entity in *DSM-III-R* broadened the definition of bipolar disorder to include patients with symptoms of mania of shorter duration without significant impairment, and subsequent work has demonstrated substantial morbidity in patients with bipolar II disorder due to the predominance of depressive episodes. The broadening of the concept of bipolar disorder in youth has been much more controversial. Previous research has established that many adults with bipolar disorder recall symptom onset during childhood or adolescence.<sup>1</sup> However, divergent definitions of bipolar disorder in pediatric populations stemmed from the notion that bipolar disorder may present differently in youth. Rather than having clear episodes of mania or hypomania, the diagnosis of bipolar disorder was applied to children with mood lability such that many of the children had ultradian symptoms of mood lability over the course of the day<sup>2</sup> or persistent nonepisodic chronic irritability.<sup>3</sup> This broadening of the definition likely contributed to a 40-fold increase in the diagnosis of bipolar disorder in youth.

## **New Data on NDIS and Psychosocial Disability**

The *People with psychosocial disability in the NDIS* report is part of a series of publicly shared reports released by the NDIA as part of the Agency's commitment to sharing specialist data in addition to the comprehensive quarterly and other reports regularly released to assist stakeholders to understand market trends. The NDIA is confident the data will provide invaluable insight for the community and wider mental health sector to identify where it can best support participants, demonstrate evidence of the benefits of the NDIS, and chart the outcomes of NDIS participants. Access the full report [here](#).

## **Dementia medication 'underused' in aged care facilities**

A researcher says Australian aged care residents should have more opportunities to trial antedementia medications before turning to antipsychotics. The study, *Antidementia medication use by aged care facility residents with dementia*, published in the *International Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry*, was undertaken by Macquarie University. The research found that antedementia medication use was less than 10 per cent each year and by 2017, this figure had decreased to 8 per cent, said Dr Kim Lind, research fellow at the Centre for Health Systems and Safety Research at Macquarie University. That was lower than other countries including the US, the UK and Denmark, the study found. Read the full *Australian Ageing Agenda* article [here](#).

## **Hospital care for people with dementia 2016–17**

Dementia is a leading cause of illness and death among Australians. This report shows that in 2016–17:

- there were about 94,800 hospitalisations of people who had at least 1 diagnosis of dementia
- the majority (71%) of dementia hospitalisations were of the highest clinical complexity compared with 16% of hospitalisations without a diagnosis of dementia
- the rate of dementia hospitalisations has decreased
- by almost a quarter in the last decade.



## **Dispensing patterns for anti-dementia medications 2016–17**

Dementia is a leading cause of illness and death among Australians. This report shows that in 2016–17:

- about 546,000 prescriptions for anti-dementia medications were dispensed to about 58,500 people aged 30 and over
- of the 4 anti-dementia medications examined, Donepezil was the most commonly dispensed medication
- older people were dispensed anti-dementia medications at a higher rate
- expenditure on anti-dementia medications totalled \$20 million.

### **The feasibility, reliability and concurrent validity of the MSReactor computerized cognitive screening tool in multiple sclerosis.**

Merlo D<sup>1</sup>, Darby D, Kalincik T, Butzkueven H, van der Walt A: [Ther Adv Neurol Disord](#). 2019 Jul 12;12:1756286419859183. doi: 10.1177/1756286419859183

Multiple sclerosis (MS) cognitive tests are resource intensive and limited by practice effects that prevent frequent retesting. Brief, reliable and valid monitoring tools are urgently needed to detect subtle, subclinical cognitive changes in people with MS. Cognitive monitoring over time could contribute to a new definition of disease progression, supplementing routine clinical monitoring. MSReactor is a scalable and reliable cognitive screening tool that can be used in the clinic and remotely. MSReactor task performance correlated with another highly validated cognitive test, was sensitive to MS and baseline predictors of cognitive performance were identified. Read the full abstract [here](#).

## **The Changing Epidemiology of Autism Spectrum Disorders**

Kristen Lyall,<sup>1</sup> Lisa Croen,<sup>2</sup> Julie Daniels,<sup>3</sup> M. Daniele Fallin,<sup>4,5</sup> Christine Ladd-Acosta,<sup>4,6</sup> Brian K. Lee,<sup>7,8</sup> Bo Y. Park,<sup>4,5</sup> Nathaniel W. Snyder,<sup>1</sup> Diana Schendel,<sup>9,10,11</sup> Heather Volk,<sup>4,5</sup> Gayle C. Windham,<sup>12</sup> and Craig Newschaffer<sup>1</sup>. Annual Review of Public Health, Vol. 38:81-102 (Volume publication date March 2017). Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a complex neurodevelopmental condition with lifelong impacts. Genetic and environmental factors contribute to ASD etiology, which remains incompletely understood. Research on ASD epidemiology has made significant advances in the past decade. Current prevalence is estimated to be at least 1.5% in developed countries, with recent increases primarily among those without comorbid intellectual disability. Genetic studies have identified a number of rare de novo mutations and gained footing in the areas of polygenic risk, epigenetics, and gene-by-environment interaction. Epidemiologic investigations focused on nongenetic factors have established advanced parental age and preterm birth as ASD risk factors, indicated that prenatal exposure to air pollution and short interpregnancy interval are potential risk factors, and suggested the need for further exploration of certain prenatal nutrients, metabolic conditions, and exposure to endocrine-disrupting chemicals. We discuss future challenges and goals for ASD epidemiology as well as public health implications.

## **Featured Course**

### **Mental Health Professionals Online Courses (MHPOD)**

Access web site [here](#)

MHPOD is an evidence-based online learning resource for people working in mental health. There are over 100 hours of material across 68 topics, written and produced in Australia. The topics range from recovery, to legislation and dual disability. Each topic includes an overview, activity, in-practice section, and resources such as checklists, templates, or links to further information. The content of MHPOD is linked to the National Practice Standards for the Mental Health Workforce. MHPOD is primarily designed for nurses, social workers, occupational therapists, psychiatrists and psychologists working in mental health in Australia. Workers in their first two years of practice in Australian clinical mental health services may find it particularly useful. It is expected that other people, including general practitioners (GPs), consumer workers, carer workers, Aboriginal health workers, and other allied health workers will also find it useful.

## Professional Certificate in Mental Health Practice (based on MHPOD)

The Professional Certificate in Mental Health Practice is the first university accredited online professional development course for mental health workers in Australia that is specifically linked to the National Practice Standards for the Mental Health Workforce and incorporates the online content of the Mental Health Professional Online Development (MHPOD), with additional assessments. This professional certificate is for eligible students enrolled through the University of Melbourne.

Professionals currently working in the field of mental health or those working in organisations where mental health issues are prevalent may find this course of interest. This may include those with backgrounds in nursing, social work, occupational therapy and other allied health fields, psychology and psychiatry, as well as general practitioners and those working in the non-government services provided for people with mental health problems, emergency services and other organisations.

For further information and to register your interest, please email [psychiatry-PRC@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:psychiatry-PRC@unimelb.edu.au)

### Education Resources

25 -29 November 2019

#### **P.A.R.T. Train The Trainer**

**(Predict Assess Respond to Threats of Aggression).**

Westmead, Sydney.

Enabling disability support, mental health, dementia care, youth care, community justice and community care organisations to have their own accredited internal trainer for their staff training programs. In the long term, this provides a great cost saving. Why not have one of your key professionals accredited as your very own internal trainer, using the pre-developed curriculum, presentation material, trainers guide, participants, guide and participants workbook. All the development is done for you. All you need to do is send a key person to this course to be trained as a trainer.

MTU Training Concepts. <mailto:info@mtu.net.au>

### Positions Vacant at Global Disability & Health Care Services

**Residential Support Workers - Disability & /or Mental Health &/or Youth Work (Casual Work) *Free phone: 1800 009 292.*** Global is a leading staff agency offering a variety of shifts to care workers throughout the greater Sydney region, Hunter, Central Coast, Illawarra, Southern Highlands and Blue Mountains. Currently we are seeking experienced support workers to work with people who have a disability. Plenty of shifts available. Weekly pay. Choose your own days & shift availability. Must have previous experience in a similar role. Police Check Certificate & Working With Children Clearance Certificate, Drivers License and First Aid Certificate required. Ability to communicate effectively with people who have a disability is essential. Must be able to work as part of a team. For more information call 1800 009 292 or forward your resume along with contact details of two referees to: [Employment@GlobalCareStaff.com](mailto:Employment@GlobalCareStaff.com)

**Registered Nurses & Endorsed Enrolled Nurses specialised in disability, mental health and general *Free phone: 1800 009 292.*** Global is one of the market leaders in the public, private mental health, disability, and general health fields. Global can offer you plenty of shifts in private and public hospitals, disability, mental health services, dual diagnosis and disability special care areas. An agency founded and run by Registered Nurses, we can assist you in finding work in a variety of locations. Choose the hours and shifts to suit your lifestyle. Must be registered to practice in Australia. Police Check Certificate & Working With Children Clearance Certificate, Up-to-date immunisation health card. Drivers License and First Aid Certificate required. **Excellent pay rates. Weekly pays.** Why not forward your resume to [Employment@GlobalCareStaff.com](mailto:Employment@GlobalCareStaff.com) or phone to speak to one of our friendly consultants who can help you make that great career move. Free phone: 1800 009 292.

See Current Positions Vacant at <http://globalcarestaff.com/job-search/>

### Conference Calendar

1 -2 November 2019

Brisbane Disability Expo. Hall 4, Royal International Convention Centre. 4Community. [Link](#)

**5 -7 November 2019**

**International Spinal Cord Society Annual Scientific Meeting, ISCoS 2019.** Nice, France. [Info](#)

**5 - 8 November 2019**

**52nd AAG Australian Association of Gerontology Conference.** Sydney. [Info](#)

**6 -8 November 2019**

**Australasian Society for Intellectual Disability Conference.** Adelaide Hilton, ASID. [Info](#).

**7 November 2019**

**Rethinking Mental Health Forum.**Sydney. [Info](#)

**8 - 9 November 2019**

**13th APCSS (Asia Pacific Spinal Cord Society).** Kaohsiung, Taiwan. [www.apcss2019.com](http://www.apcss2019.com)

**11 - 13 November 2019**

**2nd Asia Pacific Conference on Integrated Care.** Melbourne. [Registration](#)

**20 -21 November 2019**

**Festival of Inclusion Sydney.** Centre for Disability Studies, Inclusive Research Network. University of Sydney. [Info](#)

**22 -23 November 2019**

**Melbourne Disability Expo. Hall 4, Melbourne Exhibition Centre.** 4Community. [Link](#)

**25 -26 November 2019**

**7th International Conference on Physiotherapy.** Auckland NZ. [Info](#).

**25 -29 November 2019**

**P.A.R.T. Train The Trainer (Predict Assess Respond to Threats of Aggression).** Westmead, Sydney. MTU Training Concepts. <mailto:info@mtu.net.au>

**2 - 3 December 2019**

**Mental Health Conference. Melbourne.** AusMed Education. [Info](#)

**3 December 2019**

**International Day of People with Disability** <http://www.idpwd.com.au/>

**10 December 2019**

**Human Rights Day.** <http://www.un.org/en/events/humanrightsday/>

**12 - 13 December 2019**

**Mental Health Conference. Sydney.** AusMed Education. [Info](#)

**13 - 14 December 2019**

**5th International Spine Cord Repair Meeting. Barcelona, Spain,** [Info](#)

**16 - 17 December 2019**

**Mental Health Conference. Perth.** AusMed Education. [Info](#)

**21 – 22 December 2019**

**19<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Disability and Diversity.** Istanbul, Turkey. <https://www.waset.org/conference/2019/12/istanbul/ICDD>

**2 - 3 March 2020**

**Pacific Rim International Conference on Disability and Diversity.** Honolulu, Hawaii, USA. [web site](#)

6 - 7 April 2020

**NDS NSW 2020 Conference.** International Convention Centre, Sydney. [Info](#)

To list your conferences on our **Global Conference Calendar**  
– email details to [GlobalGazetteDisability@gmail.com](mailto:GlobalGazetteDisability@gmail.com)

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